THE

EXODUS:

A

POEM.

——— Quæ vos a ſtirpe parentum
Prima tulit tellus, eadem vos ubere læto
Accipiet reduces. ———

VIRGIL, Æneid. Lib. III. 94.

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL HAYES, M. A.

OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, AND USHER OF WESTMINSTER SCHOOL.

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MDCCLXXXV.

(Price Two Shillings.)

A Clauſe of Mr. SEATON's Will, Dated *Oct.* 8, 1738.

I Give my Kiſlingbury Eſtate to the Univerſity of Cambridge for ever: the Rents of which ſhall be diſpoſed of yearly by the Vice-Chancellor for the time being, as he the Vice-Chancellor, the Maſter of Clare-Hall, and the Greek Profeſſor for the time being, or any two of them ſhall agree. Which three perſons aforeſaid ſhall give out a Subject, which Subject ſhall for the firſt Year be one or other of the Perfections or Attributes of the Supreme Being, and ſo the ſucceeding Years, till the Subject is exhauſted; and afterwards the Subject ſhall be either Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell, Purity of Heart, &c. or whatever elſe may be judged by the Vice-Chancellor, Maſter of Clare-Hall, and Greek Profeſſor, to be moſt conducive to the honour of the Supreme Being and recommendation of Virtue. And they ſhall yearly diſpoſe of the Rent of the above Eſtate to that Maſter of Arts, whoſe Poem on the Subject given ſhall be beſt approved by them. Which Poem I ordain to be always in Engliſh, and to be printed; the expence of which ſhall be deducted out of the product of the Eſtate, and the reſidue given as a reward for the Compoſer of the Poem, or Ode, or Copy of Verſes.

WE, the underwritten, do aſſign Mr. SEATON's Reward for the Year 1785, to SAMUEL HAYES, M. A. for his Poem on the EXODUS; and direct the ſaid Poem to be printed according to the Tenor of the Will.

Oct. 14, 1785.

P. Peckard, Vice-Chancellor.
J. Torkington, Maſter of Clare Hall.

THE

EXODUS:

A

POEM.

TYRANTS, attend! Ye, who deſpotick reign,
Spurn not the Muſe's monitory ſtrain!
Though wealth on wealth be in your coffers ſtor'd,
Exhauſtleſs fund to deck the ſplendid board;
While round your thrones the marſhall'd Legions ſtand,
Obſequious Slaves to ev'ry fell command:
Though thus, in all the pomp of pow'r elate,
And fluſh'd with dignity's imperial ſtate,
Ye hear the Captive mourn, relentleſs hear,
Nor give the tribute of a ſingle tear;

See the loſt Widow, Orphan, ſuppliant kneel,
Nor yet one ſpark of ſoft emotion feel;
Suſpend awhile ambition's tow'ring ſchemes,
Pomp's vain parade, and pleaſure's baſeleſs dreams!
A moment pauſe! From the rich ſcene retire!
Let calm reflection check the looſe deſire!
That Pow'r who gave, if ſo his juſtice doom,
Can, in an inſtant, ev'ry gift reſume.
When the dread terrors of his vengeance wake,
E'en Empires to their very center ſhake:
Hurl'd from the throne, at his reſiſtleſs call,
Licentious Tyrants unlamented fall.
Nor doubt the awful truth. From age to age,
Recorded in the grave Hiſtorian's page,
Examples ſtand.—O Thou the Muſe inſpire,
Thou, who alone canſt wake the living fire!
Thy judgments, Everlaſting Pow'r, I ſing,
What time deſtruction whelm'd the ruthleſs King;
Egypt's obdurate Lord, who, ſwol'n with pride,
The miſſion of the God of Hoſts defied.—
Four centuries had now elaps'd, yet ſtill,
(Such the award of Heav'n's controuling will)

Iſrael in Egypt ſojourns. Hapleſs Tribe!
What words can fully woes like thine deſcribe?
Oppreſs'd by deſpotiſm's vindictive weight,
Thy Sons in vain lament their wretched ſtate;
In vain, with ſtreaming eye, and outſtretch'd hand,
Turn the fond wiſh to Canaan's fertile land,
Thoſe plains, to which, with ſacred promiſe fraught,
The ſhackled Slave directs the anxious thought.
Yet more than bondage, more than all the woes
Which Kings, or royal Minions, can impoſe,
The Sons of Iſrael mourn Religion's cauſe,
Heav'n's long-loſt rites, and violated laws.
Jehovah's name is heard no more, ſave where
The Slave in ſecret breathes forbidden pray'r.
Oft, as on feſtal days, th' Egyptian throng
Ply the looſe dance, and ſwell the choral ſong;
Or proſtrate fall before the beſtial ſhrine,
And crown their mimick Gods with rites divine,
By force conſtrain'd, there Iſrael's Sons attend,
Join the full orgies, at the altars bend;
The ſuppliant hand to ſenſeleſs Idols raiſe,
To ſenſeleſs Idols chaunt the note of praiſe;

Praiſe, which that Pow'r alone can juſtly claim,
Who form'd, who rules this univerſal frame.

Such Iſrael's ſtate. Few rays now intervene:
Darkneſs ſtill deeper ſhrouds the gloomy ſcene.
Hope, lenient Monitreſs, which could impart
The balm of comfort to the wounded heart;
Hope, which could blunt the edge of ev'ry care,
And triumph o'er the Fiends of blank deſpair,
Chill'd by adverſity's malignant ſhade,
E'en Hope herſelf foregoes the genial aid.

For lo! A Tyrant comes, whoſe haughty ſoul
No ties of gentle charity controul,
Imperious Pharaoh. He, by rancour led,
But more by fear alarm'd, by preſcient dread,
Leſt Iſrael's Tribes, now formidable grown,
Hurl bold defiance at the Deſpot's throne;
Leſt, if perchance the blaſt of war ſhould blow,
They breathe revenge, and join the marſhall'd Foe.
Hence, with ſuſpicion's reſtleſs cares oppreſt,
He feels new fury ſhake his troubled breaſt.

Ven-

Vengeance at length, for ſo the Tyrant dooms,
Vengeance at length a direr form aſſumes.
Prompt at the fell decree, th' obſequious Band
Spread wide affliction thro' the groaning land.
Toil heap'd on toil, toil with the morn begun,
Nor ended even with the ſetting Sun,
Urges the fetter'd Slave. E'en at mid-day,
When the fierce Sun darts forth the ſultry ray,
Or when the whirlwind ſweeps along the ſky,
And the parch'd duſt diſtorts the trembling eye,
Though preſs'd beneath accumulated woes,
The Wretch in vain ſolicits ſhort repoſe.
O'ercome with unremitted toil, at length,
Nature no more ſupplies her wonted ſtrength.
And ever and anon as the faint Train
Exert the body's languid pow'rs in vain,
With many a ſtripe, and many a galling ſneer,
The ſavage Agents preſs the ling'ring rear.

Nor doth e'en this ſtern Pharaoh's wrath aſſuage:
Again ſuſpicion kindles vengeful rage.

" Vain

" Vain my attempts (the baffled Tyrant cries)
" All pow'r, all threats, the ſullen Tribe defies.
" Though bondage be their lot, though ev'ry ill
" Which flows from tyranny's reſiſtleſs will,
" Harraſs the toiling Slaves, what hope remains?
" Augmented numbers darken Egypt's plains.
" Henceforth exterminating wrath take place,
" 'Till ruin whelm the contumacious race!
" Hence ev'ry Male, ſprung from the Hebrew line,
" As ſoon as born, to the deep Nile conſign."
He ſpake. The mercenary Bands obey;
Ruſh thro' the Land, and ſeize their helpleſs prey.
The yearning Mother, with diſtraction wild,
Claſps to her throbbing breaſt th' unconſcious Child;
While the torn heart, with keeneſt anguiſh bleeds,
In vain the agonizing Parent pleads.
Nor pray'rs, nor tears, nor e'en thy ſofter charm,
Sweet Innocence, arreſts th' uplifted arm.
" Where's now (They cry) the ſaving hand of Heav'n?
" O where the promiſe now, ſo firmly giv'n,
" That Iſrael's Sons, redeem'd from Egypt's chains,
" Again ſhould dwell in Canaan's bliſsful plains?

" That

" That Judah thence, with wealth and empire crown'd,
" Should reign ſupreme to Earth's remoteſt bound?
" Fir'd by the proſpect, while on ev'ry ſide,
" Adverſity pours forth her ſable tide;
" While ſtorms, with unabated fury urge,
" We brave the tempeſt, ſtem the foaming ſurge.
" But now, alas! the animating view,
" Which erſt reflected freedom's chearful hue,
" Flies, like a dream, when the dun ſhades of night
" Vaniſh before the morning's dawning light.
" In the rapacious flood, day after day,
" Remorſeleſs death receives his infant prey.
" As the majeſtick Oak, which late outſpread
" The branching honours of his regal head,
" Scath'd to the center by the livid flame,
" Exhibits now a wither'd, ſapleſs frame;
" The Parent thus, each fairer proſpect croſt,
" Each elevating hope for ever loſt,
" In ſilence droops. That thought, which could aſſuage
" The ling'ring mis'ries of declining age,
" For ever takes its flight. Deep in the heart
" Deſpair hath lodg'd th' immedicable dart."

And

And dar'ſt thou thus, dim-ſighted, froward Man,
Preſumptuous queſtion Heav'n's all-righteous plan?
Dar'ſt thou, thus diffident, becauſe forlorn,
Arraign the promiſe with o'erweening ſcorn?
Henceforth be dumb! Whate'er Jehovah wills,
In its due time, Jehovah's pow'r fulfils.

While Iſrael mourns, nor ſees a ray of light
Break thro' the ſhades of overwhelming night,
From the dark ſtream, to whoſe inſatiate bed
All comfort ſeem'd irrevocably fled,
E'en from the fatal boſom of the Nile,
Returning freedom darts th' auſpicious ſmile.
The delegated Child, by Heav'n deſign'd,
To purge the miſts of error from the mind,
To counteract the Tyrant's lawleſs ſway,
And reſcue from his graſp the trembling prey,
Beſide the Memphian ſtream, in ſedge enclos'd,
The delegated Infant lies expos'd.
Thrice had the ſilver Moon fill'd either horn,
So long the Parents, deſolate, forlorn,

To privacy's ſequeſter'd ſhades repair,
And ſhield their tender pledge with pious care.
Oft as, with gliſt'ning eye, the Parents trace
Their own reſemblance in the blooming face,
Or to the future turn the ardent thought,
And form the Man, with ev'ry virtue fraught,
Spite of the Tyrant's edict, Nature reigns;
Superior ſtill, her ſacred pow'r maintains.
Themſelves, at length, leſt Pharaoh's roaming bands
Should ſeize the Victim with unhallow'd hands,
Their Infant take, and, wrapt in verdant ſedge,
To Heav'n's protection give the tender pledge.
Nor diſtant far, obſervant of the fates,
With wiſtful look the zealous Siſter * waits;
Silent ſhe ſtands, and ſtrains th' attentive eye,
If chance ſhe can propitious aid deſcry.
Lo! on the inſtant (for the God of day
Now darted from his orb the torrid ray)
Thermutis † comes. Oft, 'midſt the noon-tide heat,
The royal Virgin ſought this cool retreat;

* Miriam. † The name given by Joſephus to Pharaoh's Daughter.

Accuſtom'd here, in the refreſhing flood,
To check the fervor of the throbbing blood.
And, as ſhe turns her eyes around, ſhe ſees,
Where the light oſiers tremble in the breeze,
The ruſhy ark. Straight her Attendants bring
The outcaſt Victim of th' unfeeling King.
All wept the Infant's fate. Above the reſt,
Compaſſion glow'd in fair Thermutis' breaſt:
Though well She knew, what ills attend on thoſe
Who dare her Father's rigid law oppoſe,
Humanity prevail'd; her ſtronger plea
Controuls the purpoſe of the fell decree.
The charms of innocence, the fond embrace,
The ſmiles depicted on the artleſs face,
The thought of what th' unhappy Parents bear,
Doom'd thus to ſacrifice their infant Heir,
All theſe at once, in union firm combin'd,
Reſiſtleſs ſway the ſympathizing mind.
Nor pity only doth the Virgin feel;
Her boſom glows with more ſubſtantial zeal.
By Miriam's tutelary hand convey'd,
Th' exulting Mother, from the royal Maid,

Receives

Receives the precious truſt. 'Tis hers to guard,
With more than common care, the tender ward.
Nor is it her inhoſpitable doom,
To fly to privacy's ſequeſter'd gloom,
Or, 'midſt the terrors of the watchful Foe,
To lead a life of unremitted woe;
And feel, from hour to hour, from day to day,
Suſpicion on the harraſs'd ſpirits prey.
To Egypt's court, where Tyrant Pharaoh reigns,
(So Heav'n's diſpoſing providence ordains)
She takes her reſcued Son: ſecure e'en there,
Foſters her Infant with maternal care.
A Princeſs deigns, all dignity forgot,
To counteract the Victim's deſtin'd lot:
Though the firſt honour of the Memphian throne,
Deigns to adopt a Stranger for her own.

Hence Moſes *, ſuch the name he now aſſum'd,
Sav'd from that fate to which he erſt was doom'd,
Grew rich in grace. From her myſterious ſtores,
Science to him her copious tribute pours.

* The word Moſes, in the Egyptian language, ſignifies one who has been drawn out of the water.

She gives, with nice diſcriminating eye,
To trace the wonders of the ſpangled ſky;
To mark the primary, controuling force,
And aſcertain the Planet's devious courſe;
Or, ſkill'd in magick, by the potent ſound,
To call the Spirit from the dark profound;
And thence, by incantation's myſtick ſpell,
Recount the paſt, the coming fates foretell.
Yet here, 'midſt learning's ſcientifick cares,
Religion her celeſtial portion ſhares.
Oft as the Slaves of arbitrary pow'r
To faithful converſe give the private hour,
Amram each moment graſps. The zealous Sire
Enflames the youthful breaſt with nobler fire.
Leſt, ſooth'd by pleaſure's faſcinating bait,
Allur'd by royalty's reſplendent ſtate,
The alien Youth deſert his Country's cauſe,
And, for a Tyrant's, ſpurn Jehovah's laws,
Before his Son th' enraptur'd Father lays
The brighter annals of preceding days;
What time the Lord of Hoſts, auſpicious Guide,
Diſpell'd all terror, ev'ry want ſupplied.

" Though

" Though dark the ſcene, though Iſrael now deſponds,
" Preſs'd by the weight of ignominious bonds,
" Be firm, my Child! In conſcious virtue bold,
" With ſteady ſtep the hallow'd purpoſe hold!
" O let not Empire, wealth, or pleaſure's charm,
" Lull the fond ſoul, and ev'ry pow'r diſarm!
" He who in Heav'n's ſupernal King confides,
" That King, whoſe ruling arm o'er all preſides,
" Braves the fierce menace of inſulting Foes:
" Fearing * his God, no other fear he knows.
" Be this thy adamantine ſhield; the Lord
" Inviolate will keep his holy word.
" The God, whom happier Iſrael erſt obey'd,
" To whom, e'en now, the fervent vow is paid,
" To whom, though bow'd beneath the weight of care,
" The ſuppliant Slave breathes interdicted pray'r,
" That God accepts the Captive's mournful cries,
" And, hearing, will in awful terror riſe.
" Far 'bove the narrow ken of human ſight,
" And ſhrouded by impenetrable light,

* Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, et n'ai point d'autre crainte.
RACINE's Athaliah.

" Baffling

" Baffling the arrogance of froward Man,
" Jehovah executes th' adopted plan.
" Doubt not but He, who erſt the promiſe gave,
" Will, with o'erſhadowing arm, his People ſave;
" Will yet, array'd in terror's direſt form,
" O'er Egypt pour the deſolating ſtorm.
" E'en in thy ſelf (ſtupendous, gracious theme!)
" Snatch'd from the boſom of the fatal ſtream,
" Thus reſcued, and with high precedence grac'd,
" Midſt Egypt's Lords, the firſt in honor plac'd.
" E'en in thy ſelf, thus wonderfully freed,
" Jehovah's pow'r, Jehovah's mercy read!
" Read and adore! O let the thought controul
" The low ſuggeſtions of the pliant ſoul!
" Though ſtern authority vindictive frown,
" Arm'd with the terrors of the Memphian crown,
" Be 't thine to vindicate a Nation's cauſe,
" Aſſert her rights, and guard her injur'd laws!
" Be 't thine, my Son, unmov'd by hoſtile force,
" To keep religion's conſecrated courſe!
" And O, may Iſrael's God, propitious Guide,
" Thy Soul confirm, o'er all thy ſteps preſide!

" May

" May Iſrael's God thy ev'ry thought befriend!
" To him, and him alone, ſubmiſſive bend." —
Thus ſpake the anxious Parent; deep impreſt,
The admonition fir'd the youthful breaſt;
Taught him to feel religion's pureſt flame,
And ſhield Jehovah's violated name.

At length th' elected Child, to manhood grown,
Though royalty adopts him for her own,
Though pleaſure, pomp, and all the charms which wait
On opulence, or empire's gorgeous ſtate,
Spread their ſoft blandiſhments, e'en at the age
When the fierce paſſions burn with tenfold rage,
When in the boſom diſſolute deſire
Awakens luſt, and lights the wanton fire,
The Son of Amram ſpurns the regal prize;
From the rich ſcene the zealous Hero flies,
And dwells 'mongſt Iſrael's Sons. Reſign'd he bears
The ſervile yoke, and ev'ry burthen ſhares.
Rather than violate Jehovah's truſt,
And live the pamper'd Slave of ſordid luſt,

He

He quits th' Egyptian Court, and, undiſmay'd,
Seeks poverty's inhoſpitable ſhade.
There, with the ſhackled Captive doom'd to bow,
The Son of Amram durſt his faith avow,
And vindicate his God. What time he ſaw
The ſavage Miniſter of Pharaoh's law
Inſult a Slave, with brave reſentment warm,
'Gainſt the ſtern Lord he rais'd the vengeful arm.
Hence forc'd to fly; for now, with wrath enflam'd,
Pharaoh the bold Offender's life proclaim'd,
In Shepherd's garb, amidſt th' Arabian Swains,
He tends the flock upon the Midian plains.
As chance, in ſearch of cool refreſhing ſhade,
Far in the Deſart's winding vale he ſtray'd,
He came near Horeb's ſacred mount. Anon,
Jehovah's Majeſty conſpicuous ſhone.
Lo! from a buſh, in many a radiant ſpire,
Shot forth uninterrupted flames of fire:
Though wrapt in flames, entire the buſh remains;
Unſcorch'd, its wonted verdure yet retains.
Moſes approach'd; aw'd by the wond'rous ſight,
With dubious ſtep, approach'd the ſtreaming light.

From

From the bright flames, in all his pow'r confeſs'd,
The living God his Servant thus addreſs'd.
" No nearer come! within this ſecret bound,
" Thou tread'ſt Jehovah's conſecrated ground.
" I am thy God; that all-pervading Lord,
" Whom Iſrael's faithful Patriarchs erſt ador'd;
" The God, who now o'er Iſrael's race preſides;
" Whoſe out-ſtretch'd arm defends, whoſe counſel guides.
" Affliction's poignant cry, the heart-felt groan
" Of deep diſtreſs, have reach'd th' ethereal throne.
" I come, their Guide, their tutelary God,
" T' avenge their cauſe, and break the Tyrant's rod;
" To lead my People forth to thoſe bleſt plains
" Where freedom dwells, and plenty ever reigns,
" Even to Canaan's fields, that bliſsful ſeat,
" By ancient promiſe doom'd their ſafe retreat.
" Be thou the Herald of the grand deſign!
" To thee, that gracious office I aſſign.
" Hence to the Memphian court, and there relate
" To Egypt's King, the op'ning ſcheme of fate!
" There, in the name of Him, that Pow'r above,
" From whom all things exiſt, in whom they move,

" Plead Iſrael's cauſe! The Tyrant, well I know,
" Will with re-doubled indignation glow.
" Yet fear not thou — diſmiſs the vain alarm!
" Beneath the umbrage of Jehovah's arm
" Thou ſhalt unhurt remain. Wide o'er the land,
" In various forms, at my ſupreme command,
" Dire peſtilence ſhall walk his baleful round,
" And blaſt with terror the devoted ground.
" Pharaoh at laſt, who, ſwoll'n with impious pride,
" All pow'r on earth, all pow'r in heav'n defied,
" Pharaoh at length ſhall yield. — But, leſt thou deem
" Jehovah's preſence here an empty dream,
" Conviction now receive. Throw down thy rod;
" That will evince the ever-living God."
He ſpake. — The rod, with vital ſpirit fraught,
Portentous change! a Serpent's figure caught.
Anon, the touch all vital ſtrength repreſs'd;
The rod again its former ſhape poſſeſs'd.
" Take this, (th' Almighty ſaid) and ſhould diſtreſs,
" Should Pharaoh's harſh decrees on Iſrael preſs,
" Be this thy confidence! Thy ſure reſource!
" The potent rod will break tyrannick force;

" Will

" Will draw down ample vengeance from above,
" Thy words confirm, thy holy miſſion prove."

Moſes, thus warn'd, retires. Yet dubious ſtill,
Though thus reveal'd Jehovah's gracious will,
He trembles at the arduous taſk; alarm'd,
Leſt the weak fault'ring tongue, by fear diſarm'd,
Betray the ſolemn truſt. From nature meek,
E'en upon trivial themes unapt to ſpeak;
Whence could he hope, 'midſt Egypt's haughty Lords,
To ſooth the Tyrant with perſuaſive words? —

At Horeb's mount (where God vouchſaf'd t' appear,
And converſe held with the appointed Seer)
Aaron his Brother meets: in utt'rance bold,
Him the Almighty deſtines to unfold
The ſolemn charge. And firſt, to Iſrael's race
They ope the ſyſtem of celeſtial grace:
Strength to th' exhauſted ſoul their words diſpenſe,
And arm with faith the fluctuating ſenſe.
Nor brooks th' important buſineſs long delay,
Inſtant to Pharaoh's court they bend their way:

In Pharaoh's preſence, with undaunted look,
Invoking Heav'n, the ſacred Herald ſpoke.
" Of Hebrew lineage ſprung, to thee, O King,
" The high beheſts of Iſrael's God we bring.
" His choſen Sons, from their own plains expell'd,
" In abject ſervitude by thee are held.
" Their God commands, that hence they now retire,
" And in the deſart wake the altar's fire:
" That there to him, their Lord, in whom they live,
" They now the tributary homage give.
" Spurn not our words! That Pow'r to whom we bend,
" Will, with unerring arm, his Sons defend."
" Think not (the Monarch cried) by vain parade
" Of ſpecious words, my judgments to evade.
" Your God we know not, and his pow'r diſclaim;
" Be 't yours to venerate th' ideal name.
" When Pharaoh's breaſt with indignation glows,
" What mortal arm ſhall dare his wrath oppoſe?
" Who dares, a Victim falls; ſwept from the world,
" And to the nether ſhades of darkneſs hurl'd.
" Here, for ſo ſtands my purpoſe, fix'd as fate,
" Shall Iſrael's wayward Tribes in bondage wait:

" Until,

" Until, exhauſted by inceſſant toil,
" Cut off for ever from their native ſoil,
" They bend obſequious to the Memphian throne;
" Own me their King, and homage me alone."
Proud Pharaoh thus.—When lo! (ſuch Heav'n's command)
Aaron threw down the wonder-working wand.
Straight, to a Serpent's figure chang'd, he breathes,
Erects his creſt, and rolls his glitt'ring wreaths.
Pharaoh, abaſh'd, invokes the magick Seers —
A Serpent ev'ry magick rod appears.
But ſhort the triumph, when frail Mortals dare
Againſt th' Almighty wage preſumptuous war.
The rod of Aaron, with rapacious force,
Amidſt his rivals winds his baneful courſe:
Nor reſts, 'till, buried in the victor's womb,
Each magick Serpent meets his fatal doom.
The tyrant King inflexible remains:
Obdurate ſtill, all fealty diſdains.

Horror be now the theme. — Deſtruction wakes:
From her wide urn o'er all the land ſhe ſhakes

Vindictive

Vindictive peſtilence. The Nile no more
With rich abundance laves the fertile ſhore:
Each lake and pool, and ev'ry tainted flood,
Sway'd by the rod of Moſes, teems with blood.
Lo! where, exhauſted by the fervent ray,
The liſtleſs cattle from their paſtures ſtray,
And ſeek the well-known ſtream: alas! in vain;
No draught allays the fever's burning pain.
No more the waters vital pow'r ſupply;
In countleſs ſhoals the ſcaly tenants die.
Infection ſpreads, and, from her humid wings,
Wide through the air, the mortal poiſon flings.
Sev'n days the plague remains. Yet Pharaoh ſpurns
Th' atteſted miſſion, and with rancour burns.
Moſes again his potent arm outſpread: —
From the prolifick river's ſlimy bed
Myriads of Frogs ariſe. In dread array
The legions march, and dim the face of day.
Around the bridal bed, at the rich board,
With luxury's voluptuous treaſures ſtor'd,
E'en in the Tyrant's palace, where, ſo late,
Looſe pleaſure reign'd in all the pride of ſtate,

The

* The loath'd Intruders ſwarm. Next from the ſand,
Pregnant with life, throughout the guilty land
Infectious Vermin rankle. Hoſts of Flies,
Arm'd with ſharp ſtings, in ev'ry quarter riſe,
Save Goſhen's plains; diſcriminating grace
Shields the bleſt ſpot, and foſters Iſrael's race.

Anon, on Flocks and Herds, and all the Train
Which, form'd for Man, tenant the Sylvan plain,
Contagion lights. The animated Steed
† Loaths the full paſture of the verdant mead:
Cold ſweat bedews his limbs, the cheſt diſtends,
‡ And the long ſob his inmoſt bowels rends:
Proſtrate he falls, and dies. The faithful Steer,
Whoſe labour oft with plenty crown'd the year,
Enervate droops, and to the ſhades of death
Unprofitably yields his parting breath.

* Frogs, lice, and flies muſt all his palace fill
With loath'd intruſion. ——— MILTON, Par. Loſt. B. XII. 177.

† ——— immemor herbæ
Victor equus. ——— VIRGIL, Georg. Lib. III. 498.

‡ ——— imaque longo
Ilia ſingultu tendunt. ——— VIRGIL, Georg. Lib. III. 506.

Nor

Nor yet alone 'mong beaſts the plague prevails;
Man next the peſtilential ſtorm aſſails.
Ulcers and boils, in one continued ſore,
Through the diſtracted frame contagion pour.
Med'cine in vain its varied pow'r applies;
The noiſome peſtilence all ſkill defies.
The magick Seers, ſpite of their boaſted art,
E'en to themſelves no lenient aid impart.
But ſtill amidſt theſe ſcenes of dire diſtreſs,
On Iſrael's choſen Sons no troubles preſs.
Their Flocks, unconſcious of the baneful change,
Securely through the peaceful valley range;
Untouch'd, their Oxen ply th' accuſtom'd toil,
Break the hard glebe, and renovate the ſoil.
Themſelves, from peſtilential fury free,
Bend to their guardian God the ſuppliant knee.

While thus the Kingdom, to its utmoſt verge,
The terrors of almighty vengeance ſcourge,
The Tyrant ſhakes with fear; for magick aid,
His firm reſource, is now in vain eſſay'd.

But what can quench ambition's proud deſire?
E'en diſappointment kindles ſtronger fire.
Like clouds, which in a moment paſs away,
Melting before the ſun's meridian ray,
His fears are ſoon diſpell'd. His breaſt again
Burns with the flame of arrogant diſdain.

Anon, the livid ſtreams of lightning glare,
Convulſive thunder rends the conſcious air:
From the wide op'ning ſky, like iron balls,
Reiterated hail on Egypt falls;
Hail, mix'd with flames; in many a gleaming train,
Shoots the quick fire, and runs along the plain.
Nor tree, nor houſe, ſo ſtrong the tempeſt beats,
Nor tree, nor houſe, afford ſecure retreats.
The Oak no more, with out-ſtretch'd arms diſplay'd,
To the faint Herd diſpenſes cooling ſhade:
The ſtorm hath ſcath'd his venerable brow,
And ſever'd from his trunk the ſpreading bough.
Transfix'd with poignant grief, the Peaſant ſtands;
Sees deſolation o'er his blaſted lands

Gigantick ſweep: Where, but the day before,
Fond fancy treaſur'd up the copious ſtore;
Where herb and tree, with rich luxuriance crown'd,
So late bedeck'd the variegated ground,
There now the eye no grateful verdure chears;
On ev'ry ſide a dreary waſte appears.

Moſes, at length, for grace and mercy pleads.
The ſtorm is huſh'd; a gentle calm ſucceeds.
But ſhort its date; for, as his fears ſubſide,
The Tyrant burns with renovated pride.
Swift as the ſever'd waves in union join,
Where the keel form'd the momentary line;
As the faint tract, mark'd by the arrow's flight,
Which, in a moment, 'ſcapes the keeneſt ſight,
So ſoon his fears ſubſide, mere idle wind,
Which paſſeth by, nor leaves a trace behind.
As if the God of Iſrael ne'er had hurl'd
His righteous thunder o'er a guilty world,
Sooth'd by the incenſe of the flatt'ring Herd,
Imperious Pharaoh ſcorns Jehovah's word.

From

From the contagious eaſt, all day, all night,
O'er Egypt ſhedding peſtilential blight,
The tempeſt blows. Scarce had the ſolar ray,
Through Heav'n's expanſe, announc'd the orient day,
Like a dark cloud, which, ſweeping from the main,
Pours devaſtation o'er the delug'd plain,
Rapacious Locuſts wing their flight. Whate'er
The thunder, fire, and hail had deign'd to ſpare,
The greedy Spoilers ſeize; nor herb, nor flow'r,
Nor ſtately tree, eſcape the noxious pow'r.
As where the drifted ſands in whirlwinds fly,
Parch'd by the fervor of the torrid ſky,
The deſart regions, ſeat of want and woe,
No veſtige of prolifick influence ſhew;
Such Egypt is: a ſolitary wild,
A waſte, where genial nature never ſmil'd.
And, dire completion, with expanded wings,
From her drear cell incumbent darkneſs ſprings,
And broods o'er Egypt. Three ſucceeding days
The ſhrouded Sun withdraws his wonted rays.
In the wide circuit of th' ethereal ſphere,
Three tedious nights, nor Moon nor ſtars appear.

The watchful Shepherd, while his flock he tends,
Oft tow'rds the eaſtern goal expectant bends;
Hour after hour, o'er the envelop'd lawn
Points the ſtrain'd eye, and chides the tardy dawn;
But chides in vain. From the meridian height,
Though the Sun now ſhould dart effulgent light,
(As when through Heav'n night's denſer vapors roll)
E'en darkneſs palpable enſhrouds the pole.
Meantime, bewilder'd by the thwarting ſhade,
From the known paſture Flocks and Herds had ſtray'd.
Here, the deep torrent intercepts their way,
And in its gulph involves th' unconſcious prey.
There, down the precipice, whoſe rugged brow
Tremendous frowns upon the vale below,
Whole herds are whelm'd; the glory of the plain,
The boaſted treaſure of the ſylvan Swain.
As through the deſolate, and bleak domains,
Where, ſix revolving Moons, chill darkneſs reigns,
Pent in the confines of their narrow cell,
Exil'd from life's prime bliſs, the chearleſs Natives dwell:
Th' Egyptians thus, by Heav'n's ſevere award,
Of ev'ry ſocial intercourſe debarr'd,

And, plung'd in night's impenetrable gloom,
(All toil ſuſpended) mourn their hapleſs doom.
The Outcaſt pleads in vain, in vain implores;
Fear bars the known, once hoſpitable doors.
The venerable Sire, whoſe languid frame
Scarce feels the impulſe of the vital flame,
Neglected groans. No lenient Friends aſſuage
The complicated woes of helpleſs age.
And, ſpite of nature's iterated cries,
The trembling Infant unaſſiſted lies.
Fain would the Mother (ev'ry want ſuppreſt)
Breathe the ſoft ſlumber o'er the troubled breaſt!
Fruitleſs her zeal. — The deep involving ſhade
Thwarts the fond wiſh, and checks maternal aid.
While thus the ſhades of midnight overwhelm,
E'en to th' extremeſt bound, the impious realm,
The Tribes of Iſrael ſtand ſecure. By day,
Th' unclouded Sun emits his wonted ray:
From Heav'n's wide arch, the Moon and Stars, by night,
Shed the mild influence of ſerener light.

Nine times, in deſolation's form array'd,
Jehovah now his judgments had diſplay'd;
Yet all are ſcorn'd; no judgments can aſſuage
The ſtubborn purpoſe of the Deſpot's rage.
Though ſcarce a gleam of flatt'ring hope remain,
Though through the land appalling famine reign;
Inflexible in guilt's adopted path,
Indignant Pharaoh ſpurns Jehovah's wrath.
And ſhall celeſtial juſtice check its plan,
Aw'd by the puny arm of froward Man?
Shall vengeance throw th' uplifted bolt aſide,
Arreſted by the threats of regal pride?
Vain thought! Though late the fatal bolt be ſped,
Perdition will o'erwhelm th' Offender's head.
That mercy, which ſo oft had interpos'd
For guilty Egypt, is for ever clos'd.
The ſtorm of direr horror takes her place,
And breaks tremendous on the harden'd race.

'Twas night, and, through the land, oblivious ſleep
O'er the exhauſted ſenſe began to creep.

In

In darkneſs ſhrouded, from th' ethereal height,
Th' exterminating Angel takes his flight;
Dread Delegate of Iſrael's injur'd Lord,
In his right hand he bears th' atteſting ſword,
And ſmites th' Egyptian realm. Rous'd by the cries,
The groans, which now from ev'ry quarter riſe,
Pharaoh ſtarts up alarm'd, and ſees, dire ſight!
His Son conſign'd to Death's eternal night,
His eldeſt Son, the Parent's pleaſing care,
Pride of his life, and Egypt's boaſted Heir.
Unſeen the hand which gives the mortal wound,
Life's ebbing current ſtreams upon the ground.
Nor mourn'd the King alone; through all the land,
Cut off by Heav'n's exterminating hand,
E'en from the palace to the rural ſhed,
Egypt's firſt born, Jehovah's victims bled:
Firſt born of Man and beaſt. Heaps of the ſlain
Strew ev'ry field, and cover ev'ry plain.—
But O! what words can paint the dire affright,
Or match the horrors of the fatal night?
Amidſt the judgments, from Jehovah pour'd,
In atteſtation dread of Iſrael's Lord,

Though

Though of life's animating joys bereft,
When ſcarce a gleam of flatt'ring hope was left,
The Parent (in misfortune's darkeſt hour,
So ſtrong, O Nature, thy ſuſtaining pow'r,)
Bleſt by the preſence of her darling Child,
E'en then the Parent ev'ry fear beguil'd.
Where now, ſad change! Where can the Suff'rer find
Aſſuaging comfort to the wounded mind?
For ever loſt is He, who could allay
Life's varied ills, chaſe ev'ry care away:
In whom, when fortune ſmil'd, the Parent found
Her happier lot with two-fold bleſſings crown'd.
Pierc'd with the agonies of dumb deſpair,
The Mother ſinks upon her bleeding Heir.
Amidſt the gen'ral carnage of the night,
No terrors on the tribe of Iſrael light.
Aw'd by the ſprinkled blood, which mark'd the place,
(Diſcriminating ſign of heav'nly grace)
From them, in mercy's milder form array'd,
The Angel turns aſide the reeking blade.

To what ſuperior arm, O God, ſave thine,
Can Man ſuch deſolating pow'r aſſign?
Or what, ſave thy benignant, guardian care,
Can, in the midſt of publick carnage, ſpare?
Conſcious of this, and overwhelm'd with dread,
Leſt heavier judgments ſtrike th' Offender's head,
The Tyrant yields, convenes the rev'rend Seers,
And, trembling, thus unfolds his gloomy fears.
" From Egypt's confines take your deſtin'd way;
" Pharaoh no more diſplays tyrannick ſway.
" Your God, that God who ſhakes the Memphian throne,
" Him now Almighty I vouchſafe to own.
" Hence with your flocks and herds, e'en all your Train,
" And bend your ſteps towards th' appointed plain!
" There, as religion's inſtitutes require,
" Upon the altar wake the ſacred fire.
" The Deity, in whom your tribes confide,
" Be he your health, your tutelary Guide.
" And as to him ye bend the ſuppliant knee,
" Amidſt your fervent vows, forget not me."

Thus Pharaoh ſpake, and ſtraight, bleſt ſound to hear,
The note of freedom ſtruck the raviſh'd ear.
Reſcued from ſervitude's oppreſſive chains,
The Sons of Iſrael croud the hated plains;
Eager to leave the Tyrant's dire abode,
And once again adore the living God.
Nor with leſs zeal (this is their laſt reſource)
Th' Egyptians quicken their intended courſe.
From ev'ry part they come; (ſo Heav'n's controul
Softens the fierceneſs of the hoſtile ſoul,)
They come; and, from their ſecret ſtores, produce
Whate'er can tend to ornament, or uſe;
Treaſures of gold, and veſts of various dye
They bring; and freely Iſrael's wants ſupply.
All now compleat, while joy fires ev'ry heart,
From Egypt's realm the num'rous bands depart.
E'en a whole Nation moves in long array,
And to the deſart take their deſtin'd way.
Though through the Philiſtèan kingdom runs
A nearer tract, forewarn'd, that Iſrael ſhuns:
Leſt looſe Idolatry's alluring charm,
With ſofter blandiſhments, the mind diſarm;

Un-nerve

Un-nerve the ſoul, and from the hallow'd law,
In pleaſure's form, its better hopes withdraw:
Or left, by formidable Hoſts enclos'd,
And inexpert themſelves, to war expos'd,
They backward turn, at death's diſtracting thought,
Preferring life, although with freedom bought.
Hence through the wilderneſs, as Heav'n decreed,
In long array th' exulting Tribes proceed:
And with them (at the preſcient hour of death,
So will'd the aged Seer's departing breath)
Are carried Joſeph's bones. By Heav'n inſpir'd,
With freedom's animating proſpect fir'd,
The diſtant time the rev'rend Seer foreſaw,
When Iſrael ſhould from Egypt's realm withdraw.

Nor abſent is their God. A cloud by day,
Preceding, aſcertains th' appointed way;
A pillar of celeſtial fire by night,
Around their tents ſheds tutelary light.
At length to Migdol Moſes leads the Hoſt,
Where the deep ſtream laves the Arabian coaſt;

Thus Pharaoh ſpake, and ſtraight, bleſt ſound to hear,
The note of freedom ſtruck the raviſh'd ear.
Reſcued from ſervitude's oppreſſive chains,
The Sons of Iſrael croud the hated plains;
Eager to leave the Tyrant's dire abode,
And once again adore the living God.
Nor with leſs zeal (this is their laſt reſource)
Th' Egyptians quicken their intended courſe.
From ev'ry part they come; (ſo Heav'n's controul
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Preceding, aſcertains th' appointed way;
A pillar of celeſtial fire by night,
Around their tents ſheds tutelary light.
At length to Migdol Moſes leads the Hoſt,
Where the deep ſtream laves the Arabian coaſt;

There they encamp.—Meantime the Tyrant's breaſt,
(So ſoon the dread of judgment is ſuppreſt)
Glows with revenge. "Shall Pharaoh then (he cried)
"By Iſrael's rebel tribes be thus defied?
"A daſtard Hoſt of contumelious Slaves
"Spurns my ſupremacy, my vengeances braves.
"Shall Egypt's King ſubmit, and let foul ſhame
"Blaſt the fair honours of his royal name?
"No.—Periſh all, victims to Pharaoh's rage,
"Who dare preſumptuous war 'gainſt Egypt wage.—
"Fortune no more the ſanguine hope beguiles;
"Prompt to our wiſh, the partial Goddeſs ſmiles.
"Near the deep ſtream encamp'd, the Tribes afford
"An eaſy prey to Egypt's thirſty ſword.
"And ſhall we, ſummon'd by benignant fate,
"Though thus diſhonour'd, ſtill inactive wait?
"Forbid it ſhame.—Prepare the martial car,
"Range the ſwift ſteeds, and pour the tide of war.
"Nought can wipe off the ſtains of foul diſgrace,
"Save the extinction of the ſullen race."

Thus ſpake the Tyrant. — All approve the doom;
Gird on the ſword, and ſhake the creſted plume.
Revenge inſpires the threat'ning band, but more
The keen remembrance of their golden ſtore;
The gifts which they on Iſrael's Sons beſtow'd,
The raging breaſt with tenfold fury goad.
Fir'd by the proſpect of unbounded prey,
The marſhall'd Troops advance in firm array.
Thron'd in his car, ſtern Pharaoh takes the lead:
E'en now anticipates the glorious deed;
E'en now, in fond imagination loſt,
Returns triumphant o'er the routed Hoſt. —

Through Iſrael's camp th' alarming tidings ſpread,
And overwhelm the ſoul with gloomy dread.
In ev'ry quarter blank deſpair appears;
Indignant murmurs next beſpeak their fears.
" Is this the boaſted freedom, this the prize,
" For which from Egypt's Tyrant Iſrael flies?
" In front, the ſea diſplays its foaming ſurge;
" Behind, the ſanguinary Legions urge.

" What

" What arm can counteract the fatal blow?
" Who reſcue Iſrael from the vengeful Foe?
" Far better fate in bondage to remain,
" And groan beneath oppreſſion's galling chain,
" Than periſh thus, whelm'd in the cloſing flood,
" Or dye the hoſtile plain with ſacred blood."—

And, dar'ſt thou thus, preſumptuous Iſrael, vent
The bold ſurmiſe of peeviſh diſcontent?
Dar'ſt thou, precipitate, that God diſown,
Whoſe judgments aw'd the Monarch's tott'ring throne?
That God, who oft, for Iſrael's Tribes, diſplay'd
Th' atteſting wonders of ſupernal aid?
Think'ſt thou, that he, aw'd by the arm of Man,
Will abrogate redemption's gracious plan?
Who reſts beneath Jehovah's out-ſtretch'd wings,
May brave the menace of oppoſing Kings.—

And lo! the ſable cloud, (auſpicious ſign!)
Which kept the foot from error's devious line,
Moves to the rear; and, leſt the Foe purſue,
With thwarting gloom obſcures the baffled view.

Yet

Yet ſtill, amidſt night's dark and low'ring ſhades,
The camp of Iſrael genial light pervades.
Moſes towards the ſea extends his rod,
The potent ſymbol of th' inſpiring God.
From the bleak eaſt all night the tempeſt beats:
Backward all night th' arreſted ſea retreats.
Soon as the morning dawn'd, 'midſt the wide flood,
Whoſe waves, like * cryſtal walls, collected ſtood,
Dry land appears. Onward the trepid Hoſt
Securely paſs, and gain the adverſe coaſt.
Nor linger Pharaoh's Bands. Swift o'er the plain,
The chariots roll towards the ſever'd main.
And now, anticipating full ſucceſs,
Through the deep gulph th' imbattl'd Legions preſs.
Once more the Son of Amram ſuppliant bends,
And o'er the parted waves his rod extends.
By Heav'n impell'd, on Iſrael's vaunting Foes,
With dreadful craſh the confluent waters cloſe.
Dread proof what judgments on the impious wait;
Not one eſcapes exterminating fate.

* Between two cryſtal walls. Paradiſe Loſt. Book XII. l. 196.

Thus

Thus reſcued from the Tyrant's out-ſtretch'd hand,
Around their Chief the Tribes of Iſrael ſtand.
He, Heav'n's avenging Delegate confeſt,
Thus ſpeaks the feelings of a grateful breaſt.
(And, as to God he pours the ſtrain divine,
In the triumphal ſong the People join.)

" To thee, eternal Pow'r, my voice I raiſe;
" To thee, Almighty, ſwell the note of praiſe.
" Thou art my ſtrength and rock. To thee belong
" Th' exalted honors of the publick Song.
" When the ſtern Foe, fluſh'd with imperial pride,
" The terrors of celeſtial wrath defied;
" When, truſting in the arm of human aid,
" 'Gainſt Heav'n his ſwelling banners he diſplay'd;
" As the ſwift flame, urg'd by the driving blaſt,
" Burns the light ſtubble of the deſart waſte,
" Thus, Lord, thy vengeance ſeiz'd th' arreſted prey,
" Swept in a moment from the face of day.

" Through Egypt ruſhing, with tremendous bound,
" The chariots roll'd, and ſhook the trembling ground.

" High

" High 'midſt the reſt, like an exalted God,
" In his proud car the creſted Monarch rode.
" Revenge, revenge, the froward Warriors cry,
" While ſparks of triumph flaſh from ev'ry eye.
" E'en now, exulting at the glorious ſcene,
" The copious harveſt of the field they glean.
" For what, when Egypt's martial Lords purſue,
" What can preſerve the daſtard, ſervile Crew?
" Perdition whelm their Hoſt, nor leave a trace,
" A ſingle veſtige of the rebel race!
" That all may hence the Gods of Egypt own,
" And bow ſubmiſſive to the Memphian throne.
" Preſumptuous threat! Where's now the Tyrant's boaſt?
" O where the triumphs of the creſted Hoſt?
" Chariots and Horſe, the flow'r of Pharaoh's pride,
" Lie whelm'd for ever in the cloſing tide.

" Among the Gods, what Deity ſhall dare
" His ſtrength with thine, eternal Lord, compare?
" What arm, what potent arm, O Lord, ſave thine,
" Can the deep waters of the ſea disjoin?

" What pow'r, ſave thine, the ſever'd waves controul,
" And bid them in their wonted channels roll?
" Thine be the praiſe. — Nor ends the triumph here:
" Edom's proud Dukes now ſhake with conſcious fear.
" The troubled Nile, in whoſe voracious womb
" Iſrael's firſt-born once met their mortal doom,
" Mourns his aſpiring hopes for ever fled,
" And tears the treſſes from his azure head.
" Where Arnon from thy mountains, Gilead, ſprings,
" And to the * briny ſea its tribute brings,
" Through ev'ry diſtrict now, wide-ſpreading fame
" Atteſts the glories of Jehovah's name.
" Aw'd by the wonders of his vengeful arm,
" Gigantick Moab feels the dread alarm,
" And ſhrinks from Iſrael's reſcued Tribes: at length,
" Owns the frail impotence of human ſtrength.
" E'en now, from Araby, where th' eaſtern ray
" Sheds on the ſkirting hills the dawn of day,
" To where the ſea, with circumſcribing waves,
" The weſtern coaſt of fertile Egypt laves,

* The dead Sea, ſaid to be particularly impregnated with Salt.

" The

" The Kings of Canaan, through her hundred States,
" Hear the dire ſummons of impending fates.
" They hear, and tremble leſt their wreſted throne,
" Transferr'd to Iſrael, alien Monarchs own.

" When o'er th' apoſtate nations of the world,
" The terrors of thy wrath, O Lord, are hurl'd,
" Who may abide the ſtorm? What mortal force
" Can check the ſhaft in its unerring courſe?
" At thy dread bidding, from her ſecret ſtores,
" Nature her complicated vengeance pours.
" Through the wide portals of the angry ſky,
" Exterminating bolts of thunder fly.
" The livid lightning darts along the plain,
" Blaſting the labours of th' affrighted Swain.
" Or from the boſom of the troubled deep,
" The waters ruſh with unreſiſted ſweep.
" Anon, Flocks, Herds, and Buildings fall a prey,
" By the wide-waſting torrent ſwept away.

" Theſe, everliving Lord, thy pow'r atteſt:
" On them th' Almighty's ſignet is impreſt.

" At

" At thy beheſts they ruſh; at thy command,
" Scatter perdition o'er a guilty land.
" But far, O far from Iſrael's happier ſeat,
" May theſe thy judgments, awful Pow'r, retreat!
" Ever, as now, in mercy's milder form,
" From Iſrael's Sons avert the low'ring ſtorm!

" As the bold * Eagle, to th' ethereal height,
" With unreverted eye, directs his flight,
" And on his pinions, far from danger's ſnares,
" Far from the Spoiler's graſp, his callow Offspring bears;
" Thus, Lord, when dangers threat, in ſtern array,
" When adverſe Pow'rs their warring Hoſts diſplay,
" Thus ſhield thy choſen race! O thus preſide!
" Safe thro' the ſtorms of war, thy reſcued People guide!

" And Ye, ye Tribes, whom Heav'n's parental care
" Hath, in the midſt of wrath, vouchſaf'd to ſpare;
" For whom Jehovah's ſelf vindictive ſtood,
" And whelm'd the Tyrant in the cloſing Flood,

* Deuteronomy, Chap. xxxii. Ver. 11.

" Deep

" Deep on the tablet of the heart engrave
" Jehovah's name! His arm alone could ſave:
" His word alone could bid the waves ſubſide,
" And on the Foe recall the ſever'd tide.

" The God of Iſrael breaks your ſervile chains,
" And points to Canaan's hoſpitable plains;
" Luxuriant Canaan, where, with laviſh hand,
" Spontaneous nature crowns the teeming land.
" If plenty, and the varied joys which wait
" On ſacred freedom's independent ſtate,
" If theſe poſſeſſions fire the patriot breaſt,
" Your God adore! Be faithful, and be bleſt.